

# Kawasaki Syndrome

## (Kawasaki Disease)

*Disease Fact Sheet Series*

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### **What is Kawasaki syndrome?**

Kawasaki syndrome is a fever causing illness of children. The cause of Kawasaki syndrome is unknown. Approximately 15 cases a year are reported in Wisconsin.

### **Who gets Kawasaki syndrome?**

Most cases occur in infants and children under age five; the illness is rarely seen in children older than 8 years old.

### **How is Kawasaki syndrome spread?**

Little is known about the way a person gets this syndrome or how it spreads. It does not appear to be transmitted from person to person.

### **What are the symptoms of Kawasaki syndrome?**

All cases have a fever that does not respond to antibiotics. It lasts more than five days and is associated with a rash, swollen lymph nodes and red eyes, lips, throat and tongue. The rash is usually confined to the patient's trunk and is sometimes followed by a peeling of the skin on the hands and fingers.

### **Does past infection make a person immune?**

Recurrences of the illness have been reported but they are extremely rare.

### **What is the treatment for Kawasaki syndrome?**

Most patients are treated in the hospital where they can be closely watched. Aspirin and immune globulin are often prescribed.

### **What are the complications associated with Kawasaki syndrome?**

The most frequent complication is coronary artery aneurysms (ballooning out of vessels in the heart). Other organs may become effected as well. Approximately 1-2 percent of cases die of the disease and its complications.

### **How can Kawasaki syndrome be prevented?**

At the present time, preventive measures are unknown.